DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 112 491 EA 007 526

AUTHOR Greenfield, T. Barr
TITLE Planning the Use of Educational Resources or the Planner's Dream Is Beautiful, But Oh...Does It Work?
PUB DATE May 75
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Conference on Educational Planning of the Calgary Board of Education (Calgary, Ontario, May 5-9, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; *Conceptual Schemes; *Educational Administration; Educational Objectives; *Educational Planning; *Educational Policy; *Models; Organizational Theories

ABSTRACT

The planner's model requires people to be rational in setting educational policies and spending resources to implement those policies. It is assumed that if an organization has difficulty in planning, the fault lies with the people, not with the model. Two images of the school cover the conceptions commonly held by many people. The image of the school as a unit of production rests on a belief that organizations act like people. Alternatively, the school may be seen as a public utility rather than as a factory. This service model of the school accounts for the fact that people develop strongly held normative views about schools and that these views frequently conflict. There are four serious objections to the planning-production model of the school. First, schools are not really organized around educational goals; second, it is very difficult to evaluate schools; third, educational policy is not made according to plan; and fourth, useful means for identifying and measuring educational resources are lacking. To improve educational planning, people must first overcome the rationalist bias in planning and look more closely at moral and experiential bases for planning. Second, people in education must be much more experimental about discovering educational purposes, applying educational resources, and evaluating the consequences of their efforts. (Author/JG)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PLANNING THE USE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

or

THE PLANNER'S DREAM IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT OH. . . DOES IT WORK?[1]

by

T. Barr Greenfield
Professor
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED112491

The planner provides a model for policy-making which is simple yet comprehensive. The beauty and power of the model are so compelling, and its logic so clear, that few people--especially among those who are responsible for social institutions--have been able to withhold their faith from it or to resist at least an attempt to apply it in their organizations. This complex conference we are attending today attests to the fact that educators have responded deeply to the planner's call to shape educational policy through rational means and to invest resources to maximize our return from them. The use of resources are in fact the heart of the issue in planning. "Who should get what?" and "What happens when they get it?" These are the questions the planner asks about resources. And indeed these are significant and basic questions in any enterprise. Surely no one questions their relevance in education.

My purpose today is not to answer these questions or to say what resources are and how they should be used. Indeed, I find it increasingly difficult to answer these questions in any satisfactory way. If these questions cannot be answered, then we must look at the model within which they were posed and ask whether there is something wrong with the questions and, more fundamentally,

---

1 A presentation to the session, "Shaking the Tree: The School and Educational Resources" of the Brass Tacks Conference on Educational Planning sponsored by the Calgary Board of Education. Calgary, May 5-9, 1975.

EA 007 526

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

something wrong with the model itself. At this point, I want to set aside an examination of the reason why I find it hard to answer the planner's questions about who should get resources and what they do with them. I will come back to these reasons later. First I want to look at the planner's model--his rules--for making decisions and setting policy. I want to ask whether the rules for planning make sense in the organizations we call schools and whether it is possible to follow them. Then I will turn again to the resource questions and conclude with some observations on how planning might be made to work in schools and how we could go about using our educational resources and assessing their value.

Planning, Organizations, and Rationality

I said I wanted to look first at the resource questions by examining the basic model for planning. In looking at the model of planning, we must also look at organizations--since schools are a variety of organization--and at rationality within organizations. The planner's model is, of course, pure reason and that is why we find its lure so strong. We all like to think of ourselves as reasonable people, particularly in our roles as professionals. There must be a rational reason for doing what we do in education or we would not do it, would we? In any case, the planner's model calls upon us to be rational in setting our policies in education and in spending our resources to implement them. The model requires at the outset that we consider the objectives of education and that we array them in order of their priority. First things first, says the planner, when it comes to allocating resources. Secondly, the planner bids us to consider what alternatives are best calculated to achieve the objectives. The most promising alternatives are the ones which should get

the resources. The third step in a planning model requires evaluation of the decisions which put resources into one alternative rather than another. Evaluation is, therefore, always in terms of the initial objectives. "How well did the decisions achieve the intended goals?" is the persistent theme of the planner.

The power of the planning model becomes apparent from its rationale. It directs us to consider what schools are for, to use our best knowledge and judgement to achieve the goals set for them, and to test rigorously how well our knowledge and judgement have achieved those goals. Failures and shortcomings in schools will in this way be discovered surely and plainly; information for correcting errors in judgement or knowledge falls into the planner's hands and is used to further improve the operation of the system. Onward and upward: this is the planner's dream.

If the planner has some anxiety in his dream, some fear that reality does not quite square with the dream, it has to do with people. The logic of the model is impeccable; it will work if people will only grasp it and act upon it. Inevitably, perhaps, some people have problems in grasping the logic or in putting it into operation. Fortunately, the modern planner has a technology to solve this problem too. In an earlier time, this technology was called human relations and participation, but these former buzz words are now passé and the contemporary planner is more likely to talk about "meeting the higher order needs of participants" or about organization development. I suspect that the with-it planner of today has abandoned these terms too in favour of something called conflict resolution or even transendental meditation. Whatever their names, these strategies have one thing in common: they assume there is something

wrong with people which causes them to get in the way of the plan. They don't communicate properly, they don't put things in proper perspective, they don't get enough joy from their work, or they can't satisfy their higher motivations. Some of the games devised to deal with these presumed problems are intensely demeaning to people and others are extraordinarily silly, but I won't go into that now. The point to be made here is that much of the technology for personal improvement and development which has grown up around planning consistently assumes that, if an organization has difficulties in planning, the fault lies with people not with the model for planning or the logic on which it is based.

The time has come, I believe, when we must ask whether the blame for the manifest difficulties which attend planning in schools and in virtually every other kind of organization, can best be pinned on human failures in implementing the plan or whether the fault lies more appropriately in the notion of planning itself. Granted that the logic of planning is clear and compelling. The question now arising is whether planning assumes a more rational world than people actually live in and whether the conditions needed to realize the benefits of the planning model exist in real life. My conclusion with respect to these questions is that the rationality of people in organizations is different from that assumed in the planning model and that the conditions required to realize the benefits of planning are seldom met in schools or any other organizations. Confronted with a budget for millions of educational dollars, many teachers, trustees, and other policy makers in schools are likely to roll their eyes towards heaven and say they just don't understand it. Yet the budget is the essential representation of educational resources, the link between goals and outcomes. In real life, educational decision-makers seldom ask how resources

are related to objectives and do not usually get clear answers if they do. Evidence of the effectiveness of the resources is equally hard to find and there is often stiff opposition to any effort which would provide it. The fading of provincial examinations and the inflation of marks to the point where B is a failure and A is virtually meaningless are but symptoms of a malaise which makes us reluctant to assess how well the resources we spend achieve the aims we set for education.

Planning and Images of the School

To this point, I have suggested that planning is based on a model or a set of rules. If an organization is to plan it must act in accordance with the rules of the model; it must build itself in the image of the planning model itself. Now it becomes appropriate to ask what image our schools are cast in. Do they reflect the logic of the planning model or do they rest on other assumptions? To answer these questions, let us consider two contrasting conceptions of what schools are and what is going on in them. In one conception, the school is seen as a place of production turning out products to specification and in the other it is seen as a public utility which lacks overriding purposes other than to give service and to assist people in pursuing their own goals.[2]

The school as a unit of production. If it is built in the image of the productive unit, schools must contain three basic elements linked closely together--goals, process, and product. Goals govern the process and the resources used in the process. Interactions between learners and the resources yield products. In turn, products are evaluated by comparing them with the goals of the school. Shortfalls between the product and the goal will therefore stimulate

---

[2] The imagery we use to describe schools is important. Their relevance to practical affairs is seen in my work, in Doris W. Ryan and T.B. Greenfield, The Class Size Question. (Toronto: The Ministry of Education, 1975), pp. 232-85.

the school to change its process or to redeploy its resources so that the product is changed and improved. Changes of process and resources are certainly apparent in schools over recent years. For example, we have seen many changes in the programs of study, in the training and qualifications of teachers, and in pupil/teacher ratios. These changes represent not only modifications of resources and process but also increases in the amount of resources spent in schools. The assumption of the planning model and of the school conceived as a unit of production is that each of these changes leads to improvements in educational outcomes and to greater realization of educational goals. The model assumes further that changes in educational process, such as those in the examples above, are based on evaluations of the changes in terms of their effects upon intended educational outcomes. At least, the model implies that if changes are not in fact evaluated in this way, they could be so evaluated and ought to be so evaluated.

The image of the school as a unit of production thus rests upon a belief that organizations act like people. On the whole, they are as rational as people are. They therefore strive to achieve their goals and to maximize their economic well-being. A contrasting view of organizations sees them not as an individual who knows his own mind and his own goals, but as a complex group of people who are caught up in a web of tangled relationships with each other and who pursue goals which seem right and practical to themselves. Since some people in organizations have better access to power and resources than do others, their goals are likely to set the course of events at least for the time they enjoy power. In this conception of organization, we would not regard schools as moving towards ultimate goals and we would not bother to evaluate schools

in terms of how well they achieve them. As organizations, schools would be seen to reflect the views and convictions of people within them, particularly those with dominant power, and we would expect people to use the resources over which they have command in line with the views and convictions. We would expect behaviour in schools to be complex, not always consistent, and no more stable and rational then the individuals themselves who make up the school. These views suggest an image of the school as a utility or agent of service.

The school as a utility or agent of service. If we abandon the notion of the school as a unit of production and if we look more steadfastly and realistically at the processes which actually occur in schools, we may begin to see schools as instruments for service rather than as mecanisms for planning. The image of the school is now not the factory but the public utility which produces a highly valued service to the community, and which operates virtually under monopoly conditions. While it is possible to say that such a conception of the school also implies a goal for education--to provide the service--the implications of such a goal are quite different from those of the usual goals held for education. In this conception of education, we may recognize that people bring their own goals to the education process and that different people may seek different kinds of involvement with the school and obtain different kinds of products, satisfaction, and achievements from that involvement.

Speaking of the telephone service as an analogy to the service provided by schools, we readily recognize that a telephone company provides a general service which, though the utility strives to keep it up to standard, may vary somewhat in kind, cost, quality, and availability in different communities.

Most important, however, in this analogy, is the fact that what the users of the utility make of its service depends in large measure upon the users, though the utility itself may have notions about what is proper and desirable kinds of usage and may take steps to encourage or enforce those kinds of usage of the service. The analogy between the service provided by public utilities and schools is by no means perfect, but it is helpful in establishing what is meant by the service model of the school. Perhaps the most important aspect of the model is that goals and products become simply parts of the process. The overriding issue in this model becomes the definition of service: What kinds of service shall be offered, to whom, where, when, and at what cost? People who offer or receive the service may have notion (goals) about what the service should be used for. The involvement with the service may yield certain kinds of consequences (products) for those who are involved. But the characteristics, interests, and skills of individuals will also greatly affect what kinds of service are offered and what people are able to make of the service which is offered.

In this conception of the school, its program, offices, and classrooms become the vehicles through which service is provided. It is not surprising in this conception of the school that people involved with it--teachers, administrators, pupils, parent, trustees, etc.--have strong feelings about what services should be provided and how they should be provided. Moreover, it should be apparent that experience with the school's services leads to firm, though not universally accepted, beliefs about what kinds of service and conditions of service are good and bad and to convictions about which of them are effective and ineffective. However, lacking objective criteria to judge the relevance

and validity of their claims, and lacking even a common basis of experience with the school's services, people holding these beliefs and convictions are likely to clash with others having different but equally firmly held convictions. The question of how many children should be in a classroom for "effective" learning is a case in point. Research and evaluation on such questions, unless the evidence conforms with our own beliefs, are always less convincing than our own experience of the issue and less useful than our own policies. After all, the policies we devise ourselves bear the supreme advantage that they have local support and appear as though they might work. Thus the service model of the school accounts both for the fact that groups of people develop strongly held normative views about what schools should be and for the fact that these views may frequently be in conflict with each other. We learn to believe in our own experience of school process and to doubt the validity of others' beliefs.

Objections to the Planning-production Model of Schools

Certainly there are alternative ways for conceiving schools besides the two presented in the previous section. However, these two images of the school appear to cover conceptions commonly held by many people. For my purposes, I find most useful the image of the school as a place of service which stands in uncertain relationship both to overriding goals and to outcomes. Schools are reduced virtually to pure process with people arguing each from their own vantage points about what process is right, proper, and good. I do not wish to defend this conception of the school, since I will return to its implications later. I do, however, wish to point out what I think are some insuperable objections to the production model of the school since this conception reflects

the planner's perspective on the school. There are four serious objections to the planning-production model of the school. First, we do not organize schools around educational goals, second, we have great difficulty in evaluating schools, third, we do not make educational policy according to plan, and, finally, we mistake what resources are.

Educational goals. Educational planning requires that schools have goals. And indeed they do, as anyone who reads the provincial courses of study can readily verify. However, most sets of official educational goals suffer from the drawback that they would justify schools doing virtually any good thing for the individual or for the society in which he lives. Whether schools actually set out to do these good things, and whether they have the power to do them, is doubtful. If all of the wide-ranging goals of education are not of equal importance, how shall the goals be ranked and who will rank them? Lacking clear guidance on which of the many possible goals of education are to be considered most important, educators have often taken the position that all the stated educational goals are of equal importance. By implication, then, this position means that schools accomplish all of the goals set for them, and indeed this claim is often made to justify the importance of schools and their claims upon very substantial public resources. While this claim puts schools and educators on the side of the angels, it poses particular problems for policy makers. If the entire educational process affects all educational goals equally, it becomes impossible to asses how changes in resources affect the achievement of different goals.

Conceivably, educational process could be more compartmentalized than it is now. Activities to develop cognitive and intellectual skills might be

organized separately from those designed to develop social adjustment or vocational skills, with totally different process, personnel, and resources being organized for each purpose. It would then be possible to assess the application of resources in terms of different kinds of goals. Unfortunately, such separation of resources runs contrary to much in currently accepted paedagogical principle and practice where activities are organized to serve multiple ends and where different activities serving the same ends are run together.

Criteria for assessment. A second objection to the planning-production model of schools arises from the impoverishment of our methods of evaluation. While the products of educational process are as varied as the goals themselves, anyone familiar with assessment procedures in education knows that the range of criteria actually used is extremely narrow. The wide-ranging criteria which are theoretically available for evaluation are simply not used in practice. In honesty, it must be said, that thoroughgoing assessments of school programs in any objective terms is rare. Judgements of individual pupils according to various criteria are common; evaluation of the total process in which they have learned seldom occurs. Such evaluation as does go on in schools usually proceeds using standardized measures of scholastic achievement. Such measures are open to criticism on fundamental grounds. They are seldom based on educational goals; even to those related to intellectual achievement. The available criteria for evaluation turn out to be better measures of individual intelligence than they do of knowledge acquired in schools. Their chief drawback therefore is that they fail to measure how well the stated goals of education have been achieved. To remedy this deficiency would require a return

to subject-matter and skill-oriented examinations. Such a return would again involve a clash with currently accepted paedagogical principle and practice.

Policy-making. The planning-production model assumes that policy is developed and resources invested on the basis of evaluated performance. But how can evaluation and feedback occur when the connection of resources to goals is uncertain and when the tools for assessing schools and their use of resources are largely lacking? If feedback and evaluation were the basis for present policy, would it have provided justification, for example, for the steady fall in pupil/teacher ratios over recent years? If the weight of research on this question over the same years were considered, it would lend more support to maintaining pupil/teacher ratios as they were than to reducing them. This fact does not argue against reducing the ratios; nor does it indicate that there was no good reason for reducing them. Rather it points out that changes in class size and pupil/teacher ratios have more frequently rested on principles, convictions, and beliefs than on the assessment of how effective the additional resources were in improving the quality of education and in achieving specified educational goals.

What are resources? The planning-production model of schools encourages us to see education in mechanistic rather than human terms. It encourages us to mistake buildings, programs, or the qualifications and training of people for the true resources of education. The resources of education are found in human experience. Skills, motivations, perceived opportunities for learning: These are the real educational resources and they come only in human form. While non-human resources are involved in building schools and an environment for learning, these resources do not produce learning directly without the

mediation of human action and intention. For example, books in a library do not in themselves produce learning. The reading of them may do so. Furthermore, the action of reading a book and learning from it is greatly influenced by the motivation, attitudes, and skill of the reader and also by the corresponding feelings and skills among those around him. A similar argument holds for the characteristics of people in a school. Their characteristics do not produce learning directly. For example, teachers have training and intelligence; they may have taught for more or fewer years. But these personal attributes do not in themselves produce learning. The actions which skilled, experienced, and intelligent teachers take in a school may do so. Finally, it should be clear that the number of people in a classroom does not itself cause or inhibit learning. What happens or does not happen in the classroom may do so. Activities in the classroom--what teachers and pupils do--is shaped by a host of factors inside it and outside it, but the direct and most powerful influences are human awareness of opportunities for learning and of means for providing these opportunities. If we are to talk about the resources of schools, we must talk about them in human terms and recognize that the non-human resources which fit so easily into the planning-production model are by no means identical with the vital resources of a school.

Improving Planning and the Use of Educational Resources

If by now you have concluded that my assessment of planning is largely negative and if you think I hold but slim hopes for rational means of improving the effectiveness of educational resources, then you have certainly caught the drift of my arguments to this point. You may then ask what prospects I see for planning in education. Is it worth the effort at all? I believe it is,

but only if we make some radical shifts in the logic of the planning model itself and if we can persuade ourselves to introduce a measure of freedom in the way we use educational resource. My quarrel with most efforts at educational planning in school systems is that they rarely amount to much more than careful window dressing. At best they are harmless fictions; at worst they are pernicious deceptions. They are harmless when we see them as ways of tidying up the presentation of the budget; they are pernicious when we mistake them for proven, powerful and reliable tools for improving the quality of education.

My suggestions for improving planning and the application of educational resources run along two lines. First, we must try to overcome the rationalist bias in planning and begin to look more closely at moral and experiential bases for planning. Secondly, and closely related to the first, we need to be much more experimental about discovering purposes, applying resources, and evaluating their consequences. While the implications of these ideas are still to be worked out in detail, I hope their major dimensions will be clear from the following points.

Overcoming the rationalist bias. The rationalist bias in planning assumes that we all know what we want to do in schools, that we are agreed on these aims, that we know how to achieve them, and that we know whether our efforts to achieve them are successful. In earlier sections of this paper I have presented arguments to demonstrate why these assumptions are wrong with respect to life in schools. I suggested that they assume more rationality than most people exhibit in the conduct of affairs in organizations like schools What other assumptions could we base planning efforts upon? Or what alternatives

are there to the linear logic and narrow rationality of the planning model? Let me outline several.

1. Our problem in planning schools is not so much to implement goals already identified, but rather to find goals for them. The problem is not that we have no objectives for schools; it is that we seldom appear to take them seriously, to exhibit real interest in and commitment to them. The planning model assumes that educational goals are pre-existing points of orientation around which people build their lives. When I say "people", I mean not only the policy-makers and professional staff of schools, but all persons--students, parents, members of the wider public--who are affected by schools. When we look at people and educational goals, we realize that there is much to be done to create a vivid sense of purpose and commitment to educational goals. As planners, we have yet to realize that most people do not have commitments to educational purposes and that schools for them are merely a job, something you have to do, or a nightmare experience to be shattered as soon as possible. James March made this point when he said, "A child of two will almost always have a less interesting set of values (yes, indeed, a worse set of values) than a child of 12. The same is true of adults. Values develop through experience."[3] But what have we done in schools to enable people to find and develop commitment to the goals we espouse for education let alone to develop new purposes and values?

2. The planner always assumes the rightness of the goals for which he plans. The problem for him is how to achieve the goals not whether they are right and good goals. We have allowed educational goals to lie dormant for so long that we have virtually stopped asking whether the goals mean anything to

---

[3] James G. March, "Model Bias in Social Action," Review of Educational Research, 42(4): 422, 1972.

anybody and whether they are good goals, or whether other goals might be as good or better. And yet there is a profound feeling of malaise and uneasiness about schools these days. There is the radical critique which I am sure you all know and which many of you may have dismissed. But what I refer to is a widespread feeling among the population at large which manifests itself in a fear or mistrust of schools. Schools are losing the sacred place they once had in our society--if indeed they ever had such a place--and have taken on an image which is at once hostile and defensive. I get the feeling that schools are too frequently run by people who say, "We know best," though they seldom ask what other people know or give them an opportunity to develop their views and commitments. Without an experimental attitude to goals themselves, without a willingness to assess goals in moral terms, I fear our best efforts to assess the effects of educational resources will be impoverished and less meaningful than they might be.

3. Perhaps the most significant change we might make in planning would be to free the rules by which we make resource allocations to schools and educational purposes. Most planning efforts are conducted within extremely narrow guidelines about the purposes for which resources may be spent and the ways in which they may be spent. For example, we define by provincial regulations the kinds of people who may be employed in schools and prescribe the kinds of training and experience which they must have. Then we bind these people into schools by laws of tenure which mean that resources are tied down for periods which must be reckoned by generations. I agree that teachers and administrators in schools should be protected from arbitrary dismissal, but I also believe that schools need much greater flexibility in the kinds of persons employed in them and in

their capacity to deploy those personnel. Unless we can create means for creating such flexibility in the most important kind of resources in schools, there is little point in talking about testing the effectiveness of resources and programs as a basis for policy-making.

4. The planning model assumes that measures of resource effectiveness are not only at hand but that they are used. In fact, however, we suffer from the lack of such measures and fail to use much of what we have. My hope is that we will move to develop better measures of educational consequences and that we will use better those we already have, particularly with respect to academic attainment. In addition, however, we should turn to wholly new kinds of criteria in the form of experience-based assessments of educational programs and resources. Some such criteria are now used but they are drawn from a very narrow selection of people. Who really gets to judge whether our educational programs work and how do they make their judgements? I believe such judgements are most frequently made by professional personnel within school systems who make them on the basis of their own intuition and experience of the issues. I don't object to this practice, but I believe we must open up the process so that we can consider the experiences and judgements of a much wider cross-section of people, including trustees, students, parents, and community members. I know that "participation" is one of the buzz words of current educational practice, but I have yet to see conditions in which a wide range of participants representing the educational public had real power to make decisions about educational resources and real scope to shape school programs the way they might want to have them. The guidelines, the rules are always there in the background and when the participants don't make the right kind of responses, the planner's begin questioning the representativeness of the participants and recalling that

"wider interests" cannot be jeopardized by local decisions. Too frequently, participation means that somebody is given the opportunity to do what the planners would have done anyway, but now it looks democratic.

5. The final suggestion for overcoming rationalist bias in planning is perhaps the most important and the one which summarizes what I have said to this point. It requires that we increase choice with respect to educational goals, programs, and outcomes. I am not sure that our society will tolerate such choice, but I believe that choice is necessary if we are to free ourselves from the false dream of the educational planner and begin to make meaningful decisions about educational goals and how we want to achieve them. My concern about whether we really want choice in schools stems from the enormous pressures which we apply to making everything the same in schools. Some people's notion of school reform in Canada would be to adopt a uniform curriculum--and probably language of instruction--throughout all ten provinces and the two territories. It's not mine. We need to introduce more differences among schools and to give people the power and the opportunity of learning from the choices they make. We can't do this by making the public school system into a straight jacket. I use the term straight jacket because I believe our images of what a school is, what it should be doing, are extremely limited, with many people glad to leave this situation as it is.

What we need is perhaps to be a little less serious about schools and certainly a lot more willing to experiment with them--or at least to let others experiment with them if we don't want to take the risk ourselves. The experimenters need not only support for their experiments and permission to undertake them; they need also the resources to carry them out even though the purposes of the

experiment may not be all that clear and even though the ways they want to use their resources will fall outside provincial guidelines. We need to be able to experiment in school in the common sense meaning of the word "experiment." That is, we need to be able to change a lot of things about schools--who teaches, what is taught, how it is taught--in order to see what happens if we do. Such experimentation in schools is often thought to be foolhardy or dangerous, but these judgements come from the rationalist perspective and do not take into account the value of intuition, commitment, and the simple sense of adventure which many people have.

We cannot realize the benefits of experimentation in school merely by speculating about how the educational world works or how it might be different and better. Experimentation must have the approval of educational authorities and the support of at least some parents, students and teachers. Minimally, the experimenters must have the capacity to direct resources into new designs for educational process and service. Additionally there must be a capacity to invent new designs for educational process and service. Such a capacity is by no means limited to present school authorities or to theorists and reseachers; practitioners, parents, and students also possess it. What all of these persons usually lack is the opportunity to put experimental designs for school programs into practice.

Failure to support such experimental designs for education and to assess their operation may be costly in the long run both to the public who support schools and to the learners within them. Without the experience gained from experimental versions of schools, our conceptions of how schools might be different and better will be limited by our experience of schools as they now exist. Changes in schools will come about as a result of pressures from the most persuasive or powerful groups concerned for schools because no one will be able

to point to experience which demonstrates that schools founded on alternate assumptions can work and provide satisfactory service. Schools will work if we build them on alternate assumptions from those now employed. But we can prove this only by trying the designs based on alternate assumptions. Not all of the alternate designs will work well enough to survive, but the opportunity to try them is the important thing. Do we dare try it? Do we dare let others try it? What we need to move us in this direction is what James March has called a technology of foolishness, an openness to playfulness in designing new schools. Sensible foolishness, of course, and serious play, but in any event we need most of all to try, perhaps to fail, and possibly to succeed.

Some directions for experimentation. In what directions might experimentation go? Let me conclude by suggesting at least some points of departure.

1. Schools have become more and more undifferentiated over recent years. They promise to do all good things for students and they avow that everyone in the schools works towards these ends. But if everyone is responsible for everything, who knows who is responsible for what? The departmentalized school is one way of answering this question. Supposing we developed groups of staff working with specified programs and resources and gave them responsibility for a single educational goal. These days with growing doubt about the school's ability to teach basic skills, I would identify a basic skills program as a prime candidate from experimentation of this kind. Or if there were concern that schools give poor vocational training, why not designate a special program which would help students find jobs they would like to do. The program would not be "vocational" in the sense we now use the term; rather it would be aimed

at giving students direct experiences with various kinds of jobs. Schools now take what I would call a "tourist" approach to the world around them. They drive students through the landscape saying, "Look at this; look at that; on your left is. . . ." It is the educational counterpart to the tourist who says, "If this is Tuesday, this must be Belgium," but the phrase now runs, "If this is Tuesday, this must be the Royal Ontario Museum." Could we not devise programs which actively involved students with the world of work in commerce, industry, and the professions? I believe we could, but the program and the personnel involved in it would be very different from anything we now have in schools. What is needed is a specific program, devoted to such objectives with specific time, space, and resources for its activities. Similar kinds of programs, each distinct in purpose, place, and personnel could be devised in schools but they would require using our resources well beyond the limits which are now placed upon them.

2. In addition to experimenting with different kinds of programs dedicated to different objectives, schools might also experiment by offering different kinds of services within these programs. What goes on in schools is now largely subordinated to the views of what teachers think of as appropriate. Their task is to teach and that is exactly what they do. I suspect however, that they do not much consider the other kinds of services which are appropriate to and needed in a school. I would like to see what would happen in a school where a serious effort were made to involve other kinds of professional and lay opinion about the kinds of services which are needed in the school and I would like to see these opinions used in shaping the programs and purposes of the school. There is now an array of professional staff in schools besides teachers, but

anyone who has examined how these persons are used in schools knows that their roles are subsidiary and supportive to what is considered the main role--that of the teacher. If there is dispute or differences of opinion between teachers and these other professional staff, then the other staff are usually cut off from access to students and to decision-making about them. For example, some psychologists adapt to this narrow definition of their functions in schools by retreating into the role of test givers from which they seldom venture. Too seldom do they give an opinion about what the results of their tests mean and too seldom suggest what might be done about them. How might schools be different if we actively involved psychologists, social workers, doctors, or lawyers in the development and operation of school programs? In addition to expanding the contribution from such professional groups, I believe we might consider increasing the contribution to schools from persons interested in recreation and culture as well. These suggestions will mean designing schools with programs, personnel, and organizations which depart considerably from our present assumptions about them. The possibility of creating and trying such schools lies clearly before us, though much remains to be done to change possibility into practical design.

3. My final suggestion for direction in experimentation concerns the development of alternative designs for schools. At present our notions of alternate designs for schools are frozen in images suggested by the open plan school at the elementary level and by the Trump plan school at the secondary level. Can we not do better than this? Can we at least not do more than this? Both of these designs are derived from other nations' imagination about their schools. Where is the Canadian imagination about schools? Do we not have hopes, dreams, and aspirations which we would like to have realized through our schools? Do we have any notions about how these possibilities might be realized? If

we gave some time, some support, and some freedom to our school, I believe we might see these designs emerging.

These lines of development I have suggested for educational planning seem to me more attractive and ultimately more practical than the planner's present dream which has locked us into a narrow and sterile search for the most effective programs and resources to achieve predetermined purposes. The alternatives may seem untried and even risky but they promise to involve people actively in a search for education purposes through greater freedom in designing our schools and spending resources for service within them. "What would you like to do in schools? What kinds of services should schools provide?" These are the questions we must ask of different kinds of people and we must ask them over and over in as many places as there may be schools. We should not be frightened of the answers but provide people with the resources to discover whether they can make their educational dreams come true. I prefer the hope of such dreams to the planner's traumatic vision of the way the world ought to be.